

**Internationalization of Political Activism in the Czech Republic after 1989**  
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## *Introduction*

The political mobilizations that marked the end of communist regimes in many East European countries raised high expectations, especially among Western observers, regarding the future of democratic citizenship in the region. When reading reflections on East European 'revolutions', one cannot but conclude that there was a wide belief in the possibility of reinvigorated active political participation in post-communist countries. However, after a short period of enthusiasm it became clear that these hopes would not materialize in the foreseeable future. East Europeans simply refused to fulfill the radical democratic hopes of some academic enthusiasts. The tone in the literature changed accordingly. There was a perceptible shift from the early emphatic enthusiasm about East European citizens, to a gloomy picture of passive, disinterested and cynical East European subjects. Many reasons for this perceived failure on the part of East Europeans were enumerated. Communist legacies, post-communist disappointment, and the inappropriate strategies of West European democracy promoters stand out among them.

This paper takes issue especially with the latter argument. It claims that international influence, which did indeed leave a deep imprint on East European civil societies, did not curb opportunities for political activism in the region, but helped create a particular activist form that is overlooked, if one looks only on the participatory side of activism. Although it was persuasively demonstrated that on average East Europeans participate less than their counterparts in the established democracies, it does not necessarily follow that civil societies in post-communist countries are weak. Furthermore, the paper claims that this outcome was not achieved due to mismanagement on the part of democracy promoters, as is sometimes suggested in the literature, but followed a path of organizational development in the democracy-promoting countries. In other words, their programs aimed at civil society building disseminated the organizational models that happened to prevail in their domestic polities. The paper supports its claims with the help of so far tentative evidence taken from several sectors of political activism in the Czech Republic.

The first section of the paper outlines the debate on political activism in Eastern Europe (EE). Drawing on a recent paper by Petrova and Tarrow, it differentiates between two forms of political activism: participatory and transactional. The second section asks what accounts for the development of transactional activism in EE. In order to find the answer, the section focuses on the resources available to social movement organizations (SMOs) in EE in general, and in the Czech Republic in particular. It shows that advocacy SMOs relied in terms of their funding on predominantly foreign sources. The third section gives an overview of these sources. The fourth section presents the story of foreign civil-society-building programs, as it is presented in the current literature. The fifth section challenges this account by proposing an alternative explanation of the strategies used by civil-society-promoting agencies. The sixth section debates the consequences of foreign funding for political activists and political contention in the Czech Republic, and once again, it strives to challenge the prevailing view that underscores its negative sides. The seventh section goes

on to assess the potential of alternative forms of radical political activism for the overall strength of social movements in the Czech Republic. The eighth section presents a case study of a foreign-funding-driven advocacy organization. The case study brings some more evidence to support the paper's main arguments. The paper concludes by putting the study of political activism into the context of a broader debate on the quality of democracy.

### *Political Activism in Eastern Europe*

There are two bodies of literature on the state of organized political activism in EE (for a review see Petrova and Tarrow 2007). The first body includes studies focused on individual participation. These studies consistently show low levels of organizational membership in the EE countries. For example, on the basis of the 1995-97 World Values Study, Marc Howard (2003, 69) documents that the average number of memberships in voluntary organizations per person in the group of post-communist countries is significantly lower than in the older democracies and post-authoritarian countries.<sup>1</sup> While the older democracies mean is 2.39, and post-authoritarian regimes score 1.89, the post-communist countries mean lags significantly behind with just 0.91. In addition, when Howard makes the comparison among the three groups of countries according to different organizational types, the results point in the same direction. The only exception is labor unions. The EE countries show higher levels of labor union membership than the post-authoritarian countries. Particularly low levels of membership are displayed by politically-oriented organizations, such as political parties and environmental groups, and church, educational, cultural, and artistic organizations (Ibid, 65-67).

Studies that focus on individual participation have regarded the low level of organizational membership in Eastern Europe as an indicator of weak civil societies in the region. However, the second body of literature on political activism in Eastern Europe challenges this account by showing the well-developed structure of advocacy organizations in that same group of countries. Although these studies do not dispute the facts documented by the individual-level scholars, they doubt that they provide a full picture of political activism in Eastern Europe. These studies document an impressive growth in the numbers of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) across the region. This shows that although there was not much mobilization on the individual level, there was indeed a great deal of organizational development in the sphere of political activism after 1989. The data used by the individual-level scholars demonstrate the limited ability of these organizations to mobilize; however, they do not say anything about other aspects of activism.

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<sup>1</sup> In Howard's study (2003, 58-59), the group of older democracies include Australia, Finland, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, US, and W. Germany. The category of post-authoritarian countries consists of Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The sample of post-communist countries comprise the Czech Republic, Eastern Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

The available evidence seem to suggest that some of these organizations have grown into relatively effective advocacy groups that have the capacity to influence the decision-making process on the national, subnational, and in some cases even transnational levels (Toepler and Salamon 2003, Císař 2004, Petrova and Tarrow 2007). Drawing on USAID studies, Petrova and Tarrow (2007) provide the most comprehensive assessment thus far of the advocacy capacity of East European NGOs. The USAID Sustainability Index measures seven dimensions of the NGO sector: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, NGO infrastructure and public image. In general, the advocacy dimension that interests us here captures “NGOs’ record in influencing public policy.” It analyses “the prevalence of advocacy in different sectors, at different levels of government, as well as with the private sector”, and considers “the extent to which coalitions of NGOs have been formed around issues ..., as well as whether NGOs monitor party platforms and government performance.” (USAID 2005) The Index uses a seven point scale, 7 showing a low level of the NGO sector development, and 1 showing a very advanced sector. Petrova and Tarrow (2007, 85) summarize the USAID findings for the new East European EU member countries in the following table:

**Table 1: Advocacy Capacity of Eastern European Civil Society Organizations**

Country	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bulgaria	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.5
Czech Republic	-	-	2.0	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.2
Estonia	-	-	2.0	1.8	2.1	2.0	2.0
Hungary	1.0	1.5	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3
Latvia	4.0	-	3.0	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.0
Lithuania	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.6	2.0
Poland	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.2	1.9
Romania	3.5	4.0	3.5	4.5	4.0	3.8	3.6
Slovenia	-	-	-	-	-	3.0	3.8
Slovakia	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	2.2

Source: Petrova and Tarrow 2007, 85.

The table seems to substantiate the claim that East European NGOs have developed a considerable advocacy capacity. According to Petrova and Tarrow, although these organizations lack the ability to mobilize individuals, i.e. to engage them in “participatory activism”, they nevertheless fare much better in terms of “transactional activism”. Transactional activism means “the ties – enduring and temporary – among organized nonstate actors and between them and political parties, power holders, and other institutions.” (Ibid, 79) In other words, the fact that East European organizations display low levels of organizational membership does not necessarily indicate the lack of any activism at all. On the contrary, by not limiting the notion of activism to its participatory dimension one can “see a richer picture of transactions consisting of coalition formation around single issues, network formation, and negotiation with elites on the part of civic groups in Central and Eastern Europe...” (Ibid, 80)

To sum up: although East European organizations are unable to mobilize masses, they are at the same time relatively effective advocates. Hence, low levels of individual participation do not necessarily indicate the weakness of civil society in Eastern Europe. The data provided in this section rather suggest that East European civil societies display peculiar character that is not based on mass participation. The point I want to make already here and develop later in the paper is that today's East European activists seem to resemble the "advocates without members" who have recently transformed the civic world in the US (Skocpol 1999).

### *Sources of Political Activism*

The available explanations of political activism in Eastern Europe mostly focus on the reasons for individual nonparticipation. Thus, according to Howard (2002, 2003), the legacy of mistrust in organized participation under the communist regimes, the persistence of friendship networks, and disappointment with post-communist developments lie behind the unwillingness of East European citizens to take part in voluntary organizations. However, as demonstrated in the previous section, this does not tell the whole story. Although the lack of participatory activism may be well explained by these factors, transactional activism still remains to be accounted for. Hence, the main question of this paper is: What explains the peculiar pattern of political activism in Eastern Europe? In other words, what made it possible for transactional activism to develop in Eastern Europe?

In order to identify the explanatory variable, I look at the resources available to advocacy organizations to sustain themselves. As the adherents of the resource mobilization paradigm pointed out long ago, political activism is based on the availability of resources, such as money, time, leadership skills, and expert knowledge (McCarthy and Zald 1977, Jenkins 1983). As the presented evidence shows, East European advocacy organizations have been unable to rely on resources provided by their membership base. There have been few members to provide organizations with their time and financial contributions. Thus, the necessary resources have had to come through different channels.

**Table 2: Composition of NGO Employment, CEE 1995/96**

Culture and Recreation	35%
Education	18%
Social Services	12%
Professional Associations and Unions	11%
Health	8%
Development	6%
Environment and Advocacy	6%
Other Fields	4%

Source: Adopted from Toepler and Salamon 2003, 370.

In general, the dominant source of funding for NGOs in Central Eastern Europe (CEE) in the 1990s was earned income, fees, and charges. These

sources of funding comprised 46 percent of NGO revenues in 1995/96 (Toepler and Salamon 2003, 372). However, as Toepler and Salamon point out, this number reflects the prevalence of fee-dependent cultural and recreation organizations, professional associations and trade unions in the non-governmental sector in CEE (for the composition of the sector, see Table 2). As a result, the aggregate number does not tell us much about the situation of advocacy organizations.

Statistics show that different types of organizations vary greatly in terms of their revenues. I will support this claim below with the data on the public funding of different types of organizations in the Czech Republic. There is, however, no systematic evidence available on the volume of earned income, fees, and charges according to the organizational type. Taking into account what was said in the previous section, this category should not play any significant role in the budgets of advocacy organizations. Although I am unable to support this hypothesis by systematic evidence, I can nevertheless provide some illustrations taken from the Czech Republic's environmental sector. The table below shows the weight of earned income and of all types of contributions by individuals (not necessarily membership dues) in the budgets of five advocacy organizations that played a visible role in the environmental campaigns of the 1990s, and that are regarded in the literature as the most important advocacy organizations in the Czech green movement (see Fagan 2004, Davis 2004).

**Table 3: Earned Income and Contributions by Individuals (% of total revenues)**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Rainbow Movement	16.6	11.7	7.9	13.4	15.5	23.3	26.7	33.9
South-Bohemian Mothers	4.6	2.6	1.2	0.9	-	-	-	-
Independent Social-Ecological Movement	-	11.1	7.3	6.7	5.0	2.9	-	6.7
Greenpeace CR	-	-	50.4	74.4	92.2	83.9	69.0	75.9
Children of the Earth	-	10.0	9.3	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Annual Reports. Calculated by author.

As Greenpeace Czech Republic presents an important exception among advocacy organizations in the Czech Republic, I will not consider it for the time being, and will come back to it later in the paper. Unlike other organizations, it actually managed to mobilize a sufficient number of individual contributors by 2002. Here, I will focus on the remaining four SMOs. Although there are important differences among them, the table illustrates that even the most successful of them – the Rainbow Movement – was still in 1998 able to generate

only 16.6 percent of its revenues by its own means.<sup>2</sup> Thus far, I have not been able to get hold of the organizations' annual reports from the early 1990 (in some cases I will be unable to get them at all, as there were no reports published at that time), but I can reasonably suppose that the situation prior to 1998 in terms of the organizations' ability to sustain themselves independently of external sources was even worse than in the period captured in the table. Indeed, this inference is supported by all the available studies (see, for example, Fagin and Jehlička 1998, Fagin 2000, Fagin and Jehlička 2003, Fagin 2004, 2005, Davis 2004, Jehlička et al. 2005). Given the lack of exact data, additional indirect evidence on the limited capacity of advocacy organizations to mobilize resources from indigenous sources is provided by public opinion polls that demonstrate on the one hand the relatively high readiness of the Czech population to donate money to voluntary organizations, while on the other hand showing that most of that money is devoted to charity and service-oriented organizations (STEM and NROS 2004).

The level of public sector funding for NGOs is over the CEE average in the Czech Republic. While the average for CEE countries was 33 percent in 1995/96, in the Czech Republic public sector funding formed 39 percent of organizations' budgets at that time (Toepler and Salamon 2003, 372-73). Again, as illustrated by Tables 4 and 5 below, their distribution among different organizational types was very uneven. The bulk of public funding was channeled to the areas of social services and sport activities. Advocacy organizations received almost no public funding. In 1999 environmental organizations obtained just 3 percent of all public funding, organizations fighting for the rights of ethnic minorities 1 percent, and consumer rights organizations received no subsidies at all. Also in 2003 advocacy organizations, represented in Table 5 by environmentalists and gender equality groups, received almost no subsidies from public sector sources.

**Table 4: Public Sector Funding for NGOs According to their Focus Areas (1999)**

A. Main areas (total)	98%
1. Social Services	27%
2. Health	13%
3. Environment	3%
4. Culture	12%
5. EU pre-accession	1%
6. Sport and recreation	31%
7. Ethnic minorities	1%
8. Social exclusion	12%
9. Consumer protection	0%
10. Emergency situations	2%
B. Other areas (total)	2%
Total	100%

Source: Adopted from Government of the Czech Republic 2000, 15.

<sup>2</sup> The number even dropped in the subsequent years, but has risen since 2001 as the result of the concerted effort of the organization to broaden its base of individual contributors (interview 1).

**Table 5: Public Sector Funding for NGOs According to their Focus Areas (2003)**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>Ministries</b>	<b>Regions</b>	<b>Municipalities</b>
1. Social services	35.66%	19.98%	15.05%
2. Health	7.83%	3.56%	6.12%
3. Environment	1.95%	5.67%	1.68%
4. Culture	11.18%	21.46%	14.70%
5. EU pre-accession	0.57%	0.15%	0.22%
6. Sport and recreation	33.93%	31.83%	54.25%
7. Gender equality	0%	0%	0%
8. Volunteering	0.03%	0.29%	0.09%
9. Ethnic minorities	1.72%	1.78%	0.76%
10. Social exclusion	6.38%	10.52%	6.57%
11. Consumer protection	0.53%	0.06%	0.00%
12. Emergency situations	0.22%	4.70%	0.56%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Adopted from Government of the Czech Republic 2004, 9.

These findings are widely supported by research on the non-state sector in the Czech Republic. On the basis of the data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, P. Frič shows that although the public sector funding of the non-governmental sector in the Czech Republic was on the rise in the 1990s, advocacy organizations newly established after 1989 received almost no benefit from it. Public sector funding displayed a highly path-dependent pattern, as service-oriented organizations that already existed before the collapse of the regime were the ones to benefit the most from it. According to Frič, this method of funding worked as “a selection mechanism that privileged one type of organizations, and was to a different extent harmful to others. Most harmed were organizations advocating human rights” (Frič 1999, 98). The main reason for this lack of support in the 1990s was the hostility of that time’s political elite towards social movements and advocacy associations. As Table 5 demonstrates, this attitude established a pattern that survived well after its main initiators lost their positions.

As the available evidence shows, advocacy organizations in the Czech Republic were able to rely neither on earned income, nor on public sector subsidies. The bulk of their activities have been financed through various foundations, mostly foreign, and grant programs. In order to illustrate this point, Table 6 gives an overview of grant funding for the five Czech environmental organizations I mentioned earlier. With the notable exception of Greenpeace Czech Republic, the table shows that the majority of their budgets were financed by various foundations’ grants (grants provided by state institutions are excluded from the table).

**Table 6: Grant-based Funding (% of total revenues)**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Rainbow Movement	75.1	77.6	86.8	76.6	79.4	73.3	65.6	49.6
South-Bohemian Mothers	81.9	95.9	96.6	79.7	-	-	-	-
Independent Social-Ecological Movement	-	86.7	90.6	89.0	76.8	95.3	-	47.3
Greenpeace CR	-	-	46.6	18.7	5.4	0	0	6.1
Children of the Earth	-	65.0	69.8	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Annual Reports. Calculated by author.

From the beginning of the 1990s, the organizations of the Czech environmental movement depended for their funding mostly on external donors. Funding sources included, among several others, the Swedish environmental organization Acid Rain, agencies such as United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Dutch Embassy, the German Marshall Fund, the British Know How Fund, and at a later stage funding coming from the EU through the Regional Environmental Center and the Phare Program (Fagan 2004, 78). In the 1990s these sources constituted the most important source of income for Czech environmental advocacy organizations. Moreover, although some of the more established groups have recently employed active strategies to mobilize individual supporters, with the exception of Greenpeace Czech Republic grant funding provided by various foundations continues to be their single most important source of money.

In 2003 there were 322 foundations in the Czech Republic. These foundations spend money from local as well as foreign sources. For example, one of the most important foundations working on civil society development, the Civil Society Development Foundation (CSDF), was established in 1993 as the implementation structure for the EU Phare program. Other foundations as well distribute money from the EU or from other foreign sources as part of their activities. Therefore, A. Fagan states that by 2000 most of “the main foundations providing funds for civic associations in the country were effectively dispensing foreign money from the EU, the UN or from individual foundations and charities” (Ibid, 110). In addition, they organize their own fundraising campaigns, receive private sector donations, and money generated on the basis of endowments from the so-called Foundation Investment Fund that was established in 1993, disbursing 1 percent of privatization revenues earmarked to support the Czech non-governmental sector. However, money started to be distributed among foundations only in 1999. For example, on the basis of this endowment the CSDF supports human rights projects (CSDF 2005, 23).

### *Building Civil Society in Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic*

International aid programs aimed at democracy promotion and building civil society in particular have flourished since the beginning of the 1990s both in the US and Western Europe.<sup>3</sup> As “vibrant civil society” began to be widely regarded as an important precondition for political stability and democratic accountability, various programs aimed at promoting “civic virtues” were designed and executed by development agencies, public and private foundations, and several other institutions in CEE (Wedel 1998, Carothers 1999, Mendelson and Glenn 2002, Henderson 2003, Scott and Steele 2005). In the beginning of the 1990s, US programs and programs by individual European governments plus US private foundations provided most of the funding. Later on, as the CEE countries embarked on the way to the EU, many of these agencies declared them to be relatively stable regimes, scaled down their programs, and moved eastwards. At that point, grants provided by the EU became the most important source of funding for advocacy organizations throughout the region. Table 7 below provides rough data on western governmental assistance.

**Table 7: Western Governmental Assistance to Central Eastern Europe 1990-1999 (millions of USD)**

	<b>1990-99</b>	<b>Democracy assistance</b>	<b>% of total to democracy assistance</b>
US	3.640	599	16.5
EU (other than Phare)	4.568		
EU (Phare)	4.550	891	19.5

Source: Mendelson and Glenn 2002, 5. EU figures do not include 1998 assistance.

Among the most active supporters of civil society in the Czech Republic were US-based private foundations, such as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies, Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and probably most important among them, the network of Soros’s Open Society Fund. According to some estimates, Soros’s network provided nearly 30 percent of all foundation funding (Quigley 1997). In 1999 several of them (Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Open Society Institute, Charles Mott Foundation, and German Marshall Fund of the United States) established an endowment fund of 75 million USD called Trust for Central and Eastern Europe, the aim of which is to support beneficial legal, financial, and political conditions for civic organizations in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria (Mareš et al. 2006, 67). In general, private

<sup>3</sup> As S. Henderson (2003, 5) summarizes: “By the end of the 1990s, the U.S. government was spending almost \$ 700 million a year on democracy promotion programs, distributed to roughly one hundred countries in Latin America, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.” In addition to governmental programs, a host of other agencies such as intergovernmental organizations and private foundations also became involved in civil society building programs.

foundations' programs were flexible and their operations were not burdened by heavy administrative requirements. From the point of view of local groups, they provided relatively easy-to-reach money. They did not require co-financing, and provided start-up and operational funding that was especially needed in the years immediately after the fall of communism. Their priorities lay in the support for organizations in the areas of environmental protection, gender, rights of ethnic minorities, support of umbrella organizations, community projects, and philanthropy (Ibid, 68).

Apart from private foundations, projects funded by the USAID were in operation in Czechoslovakia and later on in the Czech Republic in the 1990s. The USAID office was closed down in 1997; however, even now there are still some projects in the country funded by the USAID (USAID 2007). Civil society-oriented programs consisted of training for NGOs, small-grant programs focused on organizations in the areas of human rights, social services, environmental advocacy, and Democracy Network Program, which channeled small grants to NGOs through US-based intermediaries. Due to the involvement of the US embassy in the disbursement of grants, the latter suffered from some bureaucratic inflexibility (Quigley 2000). Within the framework of this program 135 million USD were distributed through grants (Mareš et al. 2006, 71). In addition, the formally independent, but publicly funded and controlled, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) provided several grants to Czech trade unions in the early 1990s (see NED 2007 for the list of supported projects).

The NED usually works through four institutions: the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, and the Center for International Private Enterprise (Scott and Steele 2005). From 1992 until 1996, especially the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) worked on civil society development in the Czech Republic. Originally its programs focused on political parties and the election process; in 1993 the Institute started to work with advocacy organizations when it "determined that one of the main challenges to the development of democracy in Czech Republic was the absence of direct citizen involvement in matters of public policy. While numerous civic groups existed, most suffered from inadequate resources and poor organizational and planning skills." In March 1994, the NDI started working in Pilsen, in order to create "a model for civic organizing". The NDI helped build a coalition among community organizations and provided training for its leaders in advocacy and organizing. The Center for Non-Profit Organizations in Pilsen was created from among various civic groups. The Center worked to "educate citizens and focus efforts on important local issues; provide training to the local NGO sector in such areas as fundraising, public relations, organizing, advocacy; and raise the visibility of the local NGO sector by coordinating activities and conducting public relations campaigns." Based on its Pilsen experience the NDI started two additional municipal NGO coalitions in 1996: the Jihlava Coalition for Non Profit Organizations and the Free Association of Non-Profit Organizations in České Budějovice (the paragraph is based on and quotations taken from NDI 2007).

Not only US-based agencies, but individual European states as well, came to the Czech Republic after the fall of communism with their programs. The Matra – KAP Program (Small Embassy Projects) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in operation from 1995 until 2007, provided grants up to 11,500 Euros to various “Czech interest groups and community organizations which seek to promote social change and the strengthening of civic society in the Czech Republic.” (MATRA 2007) Until 2003 the program supported approximately 140 NGOs and 220 projects. In this period, the focus area of minority and human rights received most of the funding, followed by the areas of social services, education, environment, and good governance; the latter concentrated on the cooperation between NGOs and state institutions (Mareš et al. 2006, 63). The Czech Republic also received funds from independent Dutch foundations. In 1991 four of them formed the Cooperative Netherlands Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe that focused on social care, and on advocacy on behalf of vulnerable social groups (CNF 2007). It operated in the country until 2003. During its existence CNF disbursed 7 million Euros through 276 projects (CNF 2003, 26). Before it withdrew, the CNF established a local foundation to substitute its activities.

The government of the United Kingdom, more precisely its Department for International Development, distributed assistance for Central Eastern Europe through the so-called British Know-How Fund that was managed by its local offices at British embassies in recipient countries. By 2001 its activities were coming to a close in the Czech Republic (Mareš et al. 2006, 64). During its existence it managed to establish partnership with a number of NGOs in the fields of “minority, human rights and environmental issues” (DFID 2007, 11). Also UK-based, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy distributes money from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, half of them through British political parties. In the Czech Republic, apart from the support for political parties the foundation also financed several civil society organizations (see NED 2007 for the list of supported projects).

German political foundations focused primarily on the reform of political institutions were also important in the region. Each German party represented in the parliament for two successive terms is entitled to establish an affiliated foundation: The Social Democratic Party is affiliated with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Christian Democratic Union with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Christian Social Union with the Hans Seidel Foundation and the Free Democrats with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The Greens originally established three foundations under the umbrella of the Stiftungsverband Regenbogen, but integrated them into the Heinrich Böll Foundation later on (Phillips 1999, 82). They officially deal with NGOs; however, most of their activities were concentrated on organizations affiliated to their partner political parties (Mareš et al. 2006, 75).

Although many foreign programs aimed at civil society promotion were scaled or closed down by the late 1990s, and even more so with the country’s accession to the EU, non-EU foreign sources still continue to support the Czech non-governmental sector through local foundations. To provide an illustration, the

2005 annual report of one local foundation (VIA) lists among other sources the following foreign agencies: Skoll Community Fund, The Foundation for a Civil Society, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Trust for Central and Eastern Europe, and the US Embassy in the Czech Republic (VIA 2005, 10).

One of the important sources of funding for Czech NGOs was the EC/EU program Phare. The Phare program was originally designed to assist post-communist countries with economic transformation and political reforms; later on the mission changed to helping the accession countries to get ready for the EU membership. Hence, in the early 1990s it primarily targeted areas such as the transformation of state-run companies, privatization, small business development, and labor market transformation (Mareš et al. 2006, 11). Nevertheless, the program also provided financial assistance in such fields as environmental protection, education, and development of civil society. To implement the program in the area of civil society, the Civil Society Development Foundation (CSDF) was established in the Czech Republic in 1993. Table 8 shows allocations for Phare programs throughout the 1990s. In addition to Phare, the CSDF distributed money from multilateral programs such as LIEN, DEMOCRACY, PARTNERSHIP, EIDHR (CSDF 2003, 8). During the first decade of its existence it supported 2,230 projects in host of areas stretching from service provision for seniors to gender and environmental advocacy (CSDF 2002). At present, as the Phare program has been closed down in the Czech Republic, the foundation manages money from the EU structural funds and implements the Transition Facility Program for organizations that are unable to get funding from structural funds (3 million Euros in 2004, mostly for advocacy organizations) (CSDF 2005, 15-22).

**Table 8: Phare Programs Managed by CSDF**

	<b>Allocation (millions of Euros)</b>	<b>Termination Date</b>
Phare 92	2,7	December 31, 1995
Phare 94	2,0	December 31, 1997
Phare 96	0,5	December 31, 1999
Phare 97	2,5	December 31, 2000
Phare 98	2,0	June 30, 2001
Phare, Access 2000	1,67	August 31, 2004
Phare 2000	4,0	July 31, 2004
Phare 2001	3,0	October 31, 2004
Phare 2002	6,0	October 31, 2005
Phare 2003	1,0	October 31, 2006

Source: CSDF 2003, 8.

#### *Who Was Supported?*

At the beginning of the 1990s, the concept of civil society became fashionable among democracy-promoting agencies around the world. In an idealized neo-Tocquevillian understanding of civil society promoters, civil society started to be understood as an associational arena formed by voluntary associations,

independent from both state and economy. Civic associations were expected to provide citizens with a means of political participation and to put a check on decision-making processes taking place within the formal structure of state institutions. It was believed that by supporting these relatively independent agencies, political reforms in transition countries would be served better than if money were provided directly to agents within the state bureaucratic structure, who lacked the flexibility and even the willingness to embark on the path of reform (Carothers 1999).

Civil society is, however, quite a fluid concept. In order to make it operative, it had to be expressed in terms that would be understandable to potential funders. As the available research on democracy promotion suggests, since the beginning of the 1990s support for civil society has been conflated with the support for advocacy NGOs (Henderson 2002, 2003, Aksartova 2006). Thus, when analyzing the USAID programs aimed at civil society building in Eastern Europe, Thomas Carothers (1999, 210) shows that they focused predominantly on NGOs

“dedicated to advocacy for what aid providers consider[ed] to be sociopolitical issues touching public interest – including election monitoring, civic education, parliamentary transparency, human rights, anticorruption, the environment, women’s rights, and indigenous people’s rights... Aid officials have in fact begun to call the advocacy NGOs they supported under civil society programs “civil society organizations,” misleadingly implying that these few, usually rather new and specialized organizations represent the core or even the bulk of civil society in the countries in question.”

By providing funding only to this particular organizational type, promoters actually enforced it across the region of CEE, causing a tremendous increase in numbers of NGOs in all transition societies (Carothers 1999, McMahon 2001, Henderson 2002, 2003, Narozhna 2004). As there were almost no other potential sources of funding available, the imperative of organizational survival dictated adapting to fit the agenda and demands of foreign donors. By now, this seems to be a well-established story of democracy promotion in post-communist societies.

According to critical assessments of civil society programs, in the beginning of the 1990s there was a widely held belief among Western political and intellectual elite that the fall of communism had equaled a total institutional collapse (Stark and Bruszt 1998). According to this view, the collapse of communist regimes brought an “institutional vacuum” that called for programs that would create new institutions from scratch. In the area of civil society building this attitude allowed for disregarding the already existing organizations, and according to critics, ultimately resulted in the complete disregard of the indigenously developed interests and collective identities. In the words of Ann Phillips: “most western observers discounted the myriad of official organizations and institutions in place in CEE at the time of transition... western scholars and policy makers alike tended to view CEE as an institutional and organizational vacuum to be filled by western imports.” (Phillips 1999, 74)

According to this criticism story, by providing institutional support Western donors not only directly influenced agendas pursued by East European “independent” organizations, but also redirected their activities from domestic mobilization of their constituencies to transnational grant-seeking (Narozhna 2004). Instead of empowering and making these organizations able to become means of participation, the programs created dependency among them, and made them caught in an endless vicious circle of grant applications. Thus, the foreign-funding dependent East European NGOs have become “ghettoized” in the sense that “they are closer to their transnational partners than the constituents they are meant to represent or the governments they claim to be influencing” (Henderson 2003, 13, see also Mendelson and Glenn 2002). According to the harshest critics, these programs actually prevented East Europeans from creating their indigenous social movements; instead, they imposed on them a particular organizational pattern that was inimical to the idea of popular movements. As a result, like the centralized state before the collapse of communism, incompetent Western donors after its end suppressed popular participation in CEE. For example, on the basis of her research of Hungarian and Polish women’s groups, Patrice McMahon (2001, 60) claims that

“American NGOs have hindered the effectiveness of women’s groups and perhaps retarded the development of women’s movements. The strategies used by international groups to support gender initiatives failed to create a domestic advocacy network in these countries. Lack of political support, institutional autonomy, and the creation of domestically supported organizations have together resulted in the marginalization of women’s groups, which neither depend on nor seek to cultivate domestic support.”

Due to the Western funding, East European civil societies were populated by relatively formalized and professionalized advocacy organizations. In order to become eligible for funding, organizations had to adapt to the organizational model that was recognized by donors as the legitimate manifestation of civic associations – an advocacy NGO. According to the critics, the variability of potential civil society organizations was thus reduced to the narrow conception of professionalized advocacy organizations unable to engage citizens in genuine contestation and political contention. Instead of social movements, public interest groups mushroomed in the region. In terms of their action repertoire, these organizations preferred cooperation with political authorities to more contentious forms of claims making. Hence, popular mobilizations across the region that accompanied the regime collapse gave soon way to a more institutionalized and moderated form of ‘interest politics’. From this point of view, the perceived promise of East European ‘revolutions’ to reinvigorate citizen participation has never materialized in practice. After the regime collapsed, people turned their backs on politics, which started to be occupied by professional political elites in both the state and civil society. The trend that had been set in motion already in the beginning of the 1990s was even reinforced after most of the original donors scaled down their programs in the second half of the 1990s. At this point, the EU

became the dominant source of foreign funding. As will be discussed later in the paper, the EU programs strengthened the pressure towards institutionalization and professionalization even more.

### *Why Advocacy NGOs?*

While this paper to some extent subscribes to the above reviewed diagnosis of EE political activism, it nevertheless refuses to see it as a result of incompetence or ignorance on the side of civil society promoting agencies, as it is often implied in the critical literature on democracy promotion programs (Wedel 1998, Henderson 2002, 2003, Narozhna 2004). There was nothing arbitrary or incompetent in the way these programs were designed and executed; rather, they followed a path-dependent logic that informed particular choices of donors to focus on the organizational model they were already familiar with. Furthermore, the paper intends to demonstrate that although foreign funders indeed failed to build up participatory civil society organizations, they nevertheless created opportunities for relatively effective advocacy organizations to emerge.

It has become to be taken-for-granted in social movement literature that organizational choices are never made in an institutional vacuum (Clemens 1993, Tarrow 1998, della Porta and Diani 1999). Rather, a culturally embedded “organizational repertoire” exists in a particular society that provides activists with a portfolio of options. As it is formed by organizational choices of the past, the repertoire is at the same time enabling and restraining. It enables activist to draw on the tried-out organizational models; however, it also limits the group of imaginable choices (Clemens 1993). In this sense, the repertoire bounds the rationality of organizational choice by the culturally-rooted understanding of what the rational is at a particular point of time. Although innovation is possible, it always takes place within the context of previous organizational choices that form the repertoire. Thus, organizational development is not fully determined by the past, but is shaped by it; in other words, it is not past- but path-dependent (Hall and Taylor 1996, Stark and Bruszt 1998).

When communism collapsed, the organizational context of civic participation and social movement mobilization in the US had just completed a transformation. While until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century American associational life was based on large membership organizations, since then a new dominant pattern of associational life has developed, based not on wide participation, but on expertise, organizational networks, and external funding. Big federations gave way to relatively small advocacy organizations that lack the mobilization capabilities of the previous organizational type. According to T. Skocpol, the mobilization of various ‘new’ movements, such as the civil rights and women rights movements, gay/lesbian, ethnic minorities, and university student movements, brought about this change in American civic life (Skocpol 1999, 467). While these movements first brought an innovative repertoire of disruptive action, in the course of time they have become established as “public interest groups”, combining occasional direct action with moderate lobbying strategies within the formal structure of federal political institutions. Drawing on data by D.

Minkoff, Skocpol claims that: "During the 1970s and 1980s, the mix of rights groups shifted sharply from cultural, protest, and social service associations toward policy advocacy groups and service providers also engaged in policy advocacy." (Ibid, 472) In response to the changing opportunity structure of US politics, these groups increasingly focused their attention on the federal level. This translated into a growing number of Washington offices concentrated on routine lobbying and the politics of influence rather than contentious politics.

Unlike traditional membership organizations that relied on their membership bases not only in order to gain influence, but also to sustain themselves financially, the new advocacy groups display a different pattern. Instead of collecting membership dues, these organizations seek funding from external sources – foundations, corporations, and governmental agencies – and solicit individual contributions via direct mail techniques and media advertising. As a result, even an organization claiming to represent a large constituency "does not absolutely need members" (Ibid, 494). The new associations rely much more heavily on expert knowledge and work of well-educated professionals than their membership-based counterparts. In Skocpol's view, their proliferation and the decline of membership organizations hindered the ability of American democracy to bring together people with different class backgrounds. New advocacy organizations work much more on behalf of the more privileged strata of American society than the organizations of the previous era (Ibid, 498-503).

It was in this organizational context that the decisions on how to promote civil societies in CEE were made. By the early 1990s, American foundations were already familiar with advocacy organizations as an established form of political representation. They had supported them at home for a long time; they wanted them to flourish also in post-communist countries (see Aksartova 2006 for a similar idea). There was nothing naïve or ill-conceived in this process, as some critics seem to suggest; donor agencies just followed the path the US politics had been following since the 1960s. As a result, the model of "advocates without members" started to be exported outside of the country.

Craig Jenkins's research on funding policies of American foundations between 1953 and 1980 shows that most of the funding distributed among American social movement organizations went into professional as opposed to indigenous organizations. While indigenous organizations "derive their resources primarily from their proclaimed beneficiaries", professional organizations "are staff-driven, derive their resources from institutions and isolated constituencies, and "speak for" rather than organize their official beneficiaries" (Jenkins 1998, 208). Jenkins breaks down the category of professional movement organizations into advocacy and technical support organizations, and shows that while indigenous organizations received 23 percent of the money, advocacy organizations received 32.1 percent, and technical support organizations 37.4 percent (Ibid). Professional organizations were preferred by donors, as they "are sufficiently isomorphic, with the hierarchical and professionalized organizations of the business and nonprofit world from which come foundation trustees and managers" (Ibid, 210). Much more than decentralized and voluntary-driven

indigenous social movement organizations, professional organizations gained legitimacy in the eyes of donors.

A similar pattern occurred in Central Eastern Europe when American foundations began to search for legitimate representatives of civil society to be supported by their programs. By signaling to East Europeans that formally registered and more or less professionally managed organizations are most likely to actually receive funding, they helped the spread of NGOs across the region (see also Narozhna 2004, Aksartova 2006). In this sense, they created connections (i.e. brokered) between their home countries and post-communist states, and by certifying the model of the formalized NGO, contributed to the diffusion of this particular organizational pattern (see McAdam et al. 2001, Tilly 2004, Tarrow 2005, Tilly and Tarrow 2007 for the terminology used here). Thus foundations worked as brokers in a process that Tarrow labels “mediated diffusion”: although brokers may never get involved in actual politics, “their key position in between otherwise unconnected sites can influence the content of the information that is communicated” (Tarrow 2005, 104).

Apart from mediated diffusion, Tarrow distinguishes between “relational” and “nonrelational” forms of diffusion. Relational diffusion takes place through interpersonal networks among people; the nonrelational version describes the process of diffusion “among people who have few or no social ties”, which takes place through the channels of mass media and communication (Ibid). Both were operative in the process of adoption of the NGO discourse in the Czech Republic, the former in the form of interpersonal networks that connected part of political elite, civil society activists, and their foreign counterparts; the latter in the writings of former President Havel and the circle of public intellectuals around him. Actually, the conflict over the meaning of civil society played an important role in the Czech public discussion throughout the 1990s. While Havel in his speeches and writings persistently advocated political functions played by civic associations, and actively supported various NGOs even in high-stakes conflicts with authorities, his main opponent V. Klaus (Prime Minister from 1992 to 1997, presently President of the Czech Republic) feared the danger of colonization of democratic politics by unaccountable NGOs. The details of this lengthy debate do not interest us here, suffice it to say that this conflict created many opportunities for Havel and his associates to over and over again point out the importance and non-substitutability of NGOs for functioning democracy (for more information on the debate, see Dvořáková 2002, Císař 2006).

In fact, Havel helped to diffuse the idea of civil society in both directions. On the one hand, he belonged to the group of the East European dissidents who helped to renew the concept’s legitimacy in the 1980s, when they put it up against the oppressive policies of the centralized communist states. In the eyes of US-based democracy promoters this was one factor that helped give the idea its new persuasiveness (Carothers 1999). On the other hand, by his writings and constant referrals to American democracy, he helped the idea to take the root in the broader Czech society after the regime’s collapse.

### *Consequences of External Funding*

The available research on the impact of foundation funding seems to suggest that by providing funds, philanthropic institutions actually contribute to the co-optation of social movements by political elites. This results in a professionalization of the activities of social movements that “siphons movement activists from grassroots organizing, thereby diverting them from their original goals and demobilizing the movements” (Jenkins 1998, 212). Hence, according to this thesis, foundations, on some accounts consciously, help transform militant movements into more moderate and less contentious actors. Instead of the co-optation thesis, C. Jenkins comes up with an alternative *channeling* thesis. He argues, first, that “foundation goals are complex”, thus, it is not possible to see foundations only as tools of social control; second, that “the main impact of movement philanthropy has been professionalization”; and third, that “professionalization has frequently created greater mobilization and social movement success.” (Ibid)

In his research on US social movements Jenkins shows that it was indeed the case: foundation funding did not necessarily lead to co-optation and goal displacement on the part of social movements; rather, it contributed to the professionalization of some components of the movements, and “allowed them to consolidate their gains and protect themselves against attack.” (Ibid, 215) According to Jenkins, the US social movements’ activities were not co-opted, but channeled towards professionalization that did not necessarily diminish the importance of indigenous components of the movements. Except for the consumer protection movement, in all other sectors studied by Jenkins indigenous groups made up most of their action between 1953 and 1980. Therefore, despite the growing professionalization of the movements, Jenkins concludes that there was no displacement of indigenous activity by professional organizations in the US.

The situation was different in CEE. While in the US foundations reacted to the mobilizations of the 1960s, and channeled already existing social movements; there were no consolidated social movements in CEE after the fall of communism. Although a wave of episodic mobilization and contention marked the end of the communist regimes across the region (see Rudbeck and Sigudsson 1999, Glenn 2003), this mobilization did not directly give birth to a group of social movements that would represent a set of recognizable claims. In Czechoslovakia, the movement that emerged out of the anti-communist mobilization soon dissolved into a number of political parties and other groups. In addition, some of the organizations that allegedly represented interests of various segments of society had already existed under the communist regime; however, these organizations were controlled by the regime and served as tools of social control over the society. All this meant that in Czechoslovakia various social movement sectors began to form exactly at the time when foreign funding arrived to build a ‘vibrant’ civil society.

As I showed in the previous sections, the emerging advocacy organizations have relied almost fully on foreign funding from the very beginning of the 1990s. Research on various sectors of social movement organizations

(SMOs) in the Czech Republic contends that these organizations became almost fully dependent on foreign funding, and as a result did not have any motivation to mobilize individual supporters within the country. There were no indigenous social movement organizations within the country; thus, there was no channeling of their mobilization similar to that observed by Jenkins in the US. It seems as though from the very beginning the emerging social movement organizations have been co-opted by the political system, moderated in their demands, and relatively institutionalized in terms of their organizational structure. Instead of potentially disruptive social movements, structural conditions after the fall of the old regime gave birth to professional NGO activists, who were trained more in grant applications and lobbying than in mobilizing. In the remainder of the paper I will first illustrate these claims by looking more closely at the results of the available research on organizations in the environmental and women rights' sectors. Second, I will question the one-sidedly negative account of the consequences of foreign funding by challenging the assumption found in these accounts that an alternative – indigenously based – funding would bring actors capable of taking a more contentious stance towards political authorities.

To start with, I will turn to Czech environmental organizations. The first post-communist government established a “State Fund for the Environment” that was to collect the money from polluters’ fines and licenses. However, this money was not made available to advocacy-oriented SMOs, but was channeled towards “apolitical conservation projects pursued by the older EMOs” (Fagan 2004, 91). The newly-established organizations had to apply for support from various funding agencies, and as Fagan shows, in some cases even from multinationals. The result was, according to Fagan, a de-radicalization of the movement. Instead of presenting an alternative to the mainstream liberal market-based view of environmental protection, it embraced the liberal view and strove to become a recognized voice in the public debate. These organizations “were keen to demonstrate their professionalism as well as their proximity to the policy process and the media.” (Ibid, 99) And there was a price to be paid for their increasing influence. They had to abandon protest in favor of policy making and lobbying that in turn demanded increasing professionalization on their part. In addition, they lost the ability to independently decide on their agenda. In order to become eligible for funding, organizations’ goals had to fit the donors’ preferences (Fagan 2004, 2005, Hicks 2004).

As the previous sections showed, in the beginning of the 1990s, mostly US-based foundations and sources from individual West European states supported this sector of social movements. By the late 1990s, when the country was already firmly on its way to the EU, these donors started to withdraw. The pre-accession funding distributed through the CSDF, the money from the UNDP, and the continuing Soros Foundation programs filled the vacuum. As EU funding gained in importance in the second half of the 1990s, the pressure towards further institutionalization and “institutional procedures – lobbying, consulting on draft legislation, researching and writing reports and opinions, attending public meetings” increased even more (Hicks 2004, 225). According to critical voices, the actual effect was to cripple the development of an autonomous environmental

movement, because EU funding only reinforced the already established relations of donor dependency. Although EU funding strategy generally differs considerably from the earlier funding by emphasizing the long-term sustainability of NGOs, it nevertheless perpetuates the old pattern by continuing to distribute project-based funding. Thus, Fagan (2005, 539) concludes:

“On one hand the EU was, and still is, pushing local fund-raising and independence from donors, whilst on the other it offers direct funding for projects, mostly concerning conservation and eco-education that require NGOs to produce reports, liaise with business and government, and increasingly become involved with implementation and monitoring of environmental-policy initiatives – in other words, the type of funding context that NGOs were used to and arguably needed to move beyond.”

The research on women rights' organizations also demonstrates that the shift in the international context of funding, from the US and European foundations and governments to the EU funding, resulted in an increased dependency, further professionalization, and a decrease in the organizations' autonomy to set their agenda (Hašková and Kolářová 2003). Similarly to the environmental SMOs, Czech women's groups have been dependent on external funding from the very beginning. However, while in the early 1990s these organizations were able to receive operational funding, the EU money is distributed on the basis of short-term project grants (Hašková and Křížková 2006, 93). In order to get this type of funding, organizations need to fulfill a number of formal criteria, which forces them to professionalize and “projectify” their activities. Only formally registered organizations with offices and employees can qualify for EU funding. At the same time, a relatively well-developed organizational capacity helps them adjust to the specific conditions attached to the distributed grants. The organizations are in need of continuous funding, but most of the funding available is project-based; therefore, they are forced to conceal costs not related to the project they apply for within the project's budget.

In general, in order to ensure their survival, women's organizations have had to adjust to the EU's mainstream reform agenda in the area of gender. Organizations that were unable to reformulate their agenda ceased to exist. A case in point is a Prague-based organization that due to the changed funding pattern had to transform its agenda to fit the EU sponsored programs, appoint as its director a professional fundraiser, employ more staff, and focus on grant applications and networking with public officials (Ibid, 95). Although except for very small groups (see Kolářová 2004) there were no radical feminist organizations even in the first half of the 1990s, the protracted dependency of the existing groups on the EU created a further obstacle for them to engage in some form of contentious action. As they seek cooperation with political authorities, there is no way for them to voice a radical agenda. It would de-legitimize their standing in the eyes of decision-makers. In the case of women's rights, this has been even further reinforced by the ideological climate in the Czech Republic that

has been very unfavorable to the import of radical feminist demands even among the women organizations (Vráblíková 2007).

The evidence presented thus far has pointed to dependency on foreign funding as an important reason for the advocacy organizations to professionalize their activities and moderate their strategies. According to some scholars, in order to facilitate the emergence of more autonomous and contentious social movement actors in the Czech Republic, the SMOs would have to change the revenue structure of their budgets in favor of individual contributions generated from within the country. It is argued that such a change would allow for a more independent agenda on the part of the local SMOs than is presently the case. This agenda would mirror the needs of local population instead of donors' requirements. In addition, as they would be freed from the reporting obligations towards donors, they would also be free to engage in more contentious collective action. Thus A. Fagan hopes for a civil society that would shift "from elite-level 'problem-solving' organizations that operate on the periphery of the elite, towards grass-roots movements and organizations that view civil society as a vehicle for articulating alternative perspectives and opinions and for contesting power..." (Fagan 2005, 533). In order to approximate this ideal, "Czech environmental NGOs need to follow the West European example and acquire a larger membership base that would provide them with sustainable income" (Ibid, 530).

As there is one important organization in the Czech Republic – Greenpeace – that followed Fagan's recommendation and became self-sustainable by 2002, we can tentatively test Fagan's claim and see whether the alternative funding strategy actually led to an alternative organizational development and a different set of political strategies. Greenpeace Czech Republic encountered severe financial problems in the second half of the 1990s that resulted in a decision by Greenpeace International to help devise a plan that would make the Czech organization fully self-sustainable. Greenpeace Czech Republic embarked on this reform plan in 1998 and planned to achieve financial sustainability by 2001. In order to meet the plan's objectives, the organization hired more professional fundraisers, and a former business manager was appointed as director. Hence the ambitious goals of the plan actually contributed to the increasing professionalization of the organization, and introduced more formalized management techniques.

There were consequences for the organization's agenda as well. As Greenpeace sought to find resonance with broader public opinion, it refrained from some controversial campaigns that were taking place at that time in the Czech Republic, such as the campaign against the completion of construction work on the second Czech nuclear power plant Temelin. Although Greenpeace International pressed the Czech group to engage on the issue as it did in the early 1990s, it was not deemed wise by the local organization at the time of the reform plan because it could discourage potential contributors. Although there was a relatively robust campaign against the power plant in the 1990s (dominated by the Czech member of Friends of the Earth; see also the penultimate section of the paper), public opinion was constantly supportive of completing the plant (Public Opinion Research Centre 2001). Thus, it was

decided by Greenpeace to create the kind of “campaign mix” that would be more attractive to potential supporters, and avoid too-controversial issues, at least until the program’s goals were achieved (interview 2):

“Having been in the middle of the reform plan aimed at self-sufficiency... so, several people in the office just feared going into very controversial issues. And Temelin before completion in 2000 was still very controversial issue... Naturally, for forests, whales and for these explicitly green issues, one can get support easier than for smoking power plants. It is generally known and it is related to something, which is called the appropriate campaign mix...”

As a result, the Czech organization focused on whales, and its campaign helped the country to get into the International Whaling Commission to tip the balance in favor of the so-called anti-whaling states. In other words, Greenpeace focused on improving its “campaign mix”, which actually meant moderation and avoiding political controversy, which could arouse a negative public response. As a result of professionalization and a non-controversial stance, Greenpeace won its battle over finance and managed to recruit a sufficient number of individual contributors by 2002 (see Table 3).

The results in terms of organizational development and the strategy choices made by Greenpeace heavily resembled the organizations that remained dependent on foreign funding. In the case of Greenpeace too, one could observe a tendency towards professionalization and moderation. Though via different route than the foreign-funding-dependent organizations, Greenpeace ended up in a situation like that of a professionally-driven public interest group. Moreover, like foreign-funding-dependent organizations that are forced to devote substantial resources to grant management; i.e. to administration, Greenpeace devotes substantial resources to maintaining itself as a self-sufficient organization. It spends important part of its budget on fundrising (see Table 9), and four of its 14 employees work as full-time fundraisers (interview 2).

**Table 9: Expenses of Greenpeace Czech Republic (% of total expenses; 2000-2002)**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Campaigns	20.2	19.0	29.6
Media and communication	5.8	5.2	15.2
Fundrising	49.7	53.6	38.3
Administration and other costs	24.3	22.2	16.9

Source: Annual reports. Calculated by author.

Independence from grants did not allow Greenpeace to become an agent challenging the system. In fact, in order to make itself ‘sellable’ on the domestic market, the organization had to adjust to the demands of domestic public opinion. One cannot but ask whether it was not the foreign-money dependency that actually *enabled* some organizations to swim against the current of public opinion

and voice an agenda that would otherwise never find its way to the public debate, such as that over the Temelin nuclear power plant. A very similar situation occurred with the issue of “domestic violence” that was set for domestic women’s groups by their foreign partners, and would probably have never made it to the political arena without them, given the way the issue was denigrated and even ridiculed in the country in the beginning of the 1990s. In the next-to-last section of the paper, I will illustrate this foreign-promoted political advocacy by recounting the Czech Friends of the Earth’s involvement in the transnational campaign against Temelin. Before that, I will focus on alternative forms of radical political activism in the Czech Republic and its international component. Do these loose networks of radical organizations fare any better in terms of their potential to challenge, as some observers claim to be the case?

### *A Radical Alternative?*

Besides the group of the more visible and high-profile professional organizations in both the environmental and women rights sectors, since the 1990s more radical groups have existed as well. As they chose to resist the liberal-reformist neo-Tocquevillian agenda of foreign donors, they were unable and at the same time unwilling to qualify for funding (interview 3, Vrábílková 2007). In the late 1990s, administratively-demanding EU funding contributed even more to their marginalization within their respective social movements. In the environmental movement, community activism and eco-anarchist networks differentiated themselves from mainstream NGO advocacy. According to Fagan (2005), these groups are not only differently developed organizationally, and pursue goals different from NGOs, but they even lack connections to them. A similar pattern was observed in the case of women rights movement (Hašková and Kolářová 2003).

Foreign funding created a rift within both movements between the haves and the have-nots (see also Henderson 2002, Fagan 2004). The former could get access to necessary resources and develop their organizational and advocacy capacities, which helped them to establish themselves as relatively influential public interest SMOs. On the way, they had to refrain from radical agendas and strategies, and accept a more moderate lobbying repertoire. The latter preserved some sort of autonomy from the donors; however, as they were unable to generate the necessary organizational resources elsewhere, they remained marginalized within the political system, unable to present themselves as a recognizable alternative to the mainstream NGOs. Moreover, due to the lack of organizational capacity on their side, they were unable to engage in more contentious action. Hence, albeit for different reasons both the haves and the have-nots were incapacitated in terms of their ability to employ contentious strategies.

Table 10 shows the numbers of newspaper reports on “contentious gatherings” (Tilly 1995, 63) of Czech anarchists between 1996 and 2006 I was able to retrieve from the archive of the biggest Czech newspaper (MF Dnes).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The data set was obtained by searching the newspaper’s electronic database by the word “anarchists” in its most common language form. This search gained 505 reports. After reading

Thus far I have been unable to code these news reports systematically in terms of the number of activists taking part in them and the object of their claims. However, the reading of these reports clearly shows a limited capacity on the part of Czech anarchists to address a wider audience and mobilize a substantial following. Most of the included protest events describe gatherings of up to 150-200 people. In many cases they describe action of only several dozen or even just a handful of individuals. The limited mobilization capacity of the Czech anarchist movement has also been confirmed by other sources. Both the movement's participants and the state agencies monitoring the movement concur on this (E-mail communication 1, 2; Ministry of Interior 1999-2005).

**Table 10: Contentious Gatherings of Czech Anarchists**

	<b>Number of events</b>	<b>%</b>
Peaceful demonstration	71	68.9
Confrontational protest	8	7.8
Violence against property	1	0.97
Protest against far-Right organizations	23	22.3

Source: MF Dnes; compiled by author. The table excludes the protest events related to the IMF/WB Summit (2000) and the NATO Summit (2002).

In the Czech Republic anarchists are perceived as 'extremist' organizations. They lack any 'coalition potential'; in fact, they deliberately refuse cooperation with the mainstream NGOs that, according to them, 'sold out' (E-mail communication 1, interview 3). The same uncooperative attitude can be observed on the side of the mainstream organizations, which simply do not want to be compared to 'radicals', as it would damage their standing vis-à-vis political authorities and public officials. Their image of legitimate 'public interest groups' would be shaken once they engage with organizations and groups recognized by the state authorities as far-Left extremists (interview 5, Cisar 2004).

Therefore it is very doubtful whether eco-anarchist networks can be regarded as a source of the environmental movement's revival; instead, they present an alternative form of activism that differentiates itself from the liberal mainstream. Contrary to instrumentally-oriented NGOs they display more counter-cultural leanings. These networks seemingly enjoy a higher level of autonomy than their institutionalized colleagues; at the same time, they lack their political influence. They are limited in two respects. First, as I have already said, they lack resources. Second, their claims do not widely resonate with the discursive climate in the Czech Republic. (According to a public opinion poll

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them, I included 103 of them into the data set. The data set is not yet completed. As substantives have seven declinations in the Czech language, one needs to search by all of them, and subsequently exclude the duplicates. This work is currently under way. However, as I used the most common form of the word to collect the present version of the data set, I do not expect a substantial change in the overall numbers of gatherings when the data set is completed. In order to receive data on domestic contentious gatherings only, I excluded all the events related to the two big transnational mobilizations that took place in the Czech Republic to protest the IMF/WB Summit in 2000 and the NATO Summit in 2002.

conducted in 2005, anarchism and radicalism are able to rally support of negligible 1 percent of the Czech population; Public Opinion Research Centre 2005). Moreover, they are framed as extremists by the state authorities, as well as by the mainstream media, and their organizations are under constant police monitoring. They even display a limited capacity to network among themselves (Bastl 2001).

As the radical groups around the world have now begun to be more and more internationally coordinated in relation to the mobilizations of the so-called alter-globalization movement (Tarrow 2002, 2005, della Porta and Tarrow 2005, della Porta et al. 2006), some expected to observe tangible effects of this increased mobilization in the Czech Republic as well. Indeed, an opportunity seemed to be opened in 2000 when the Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) Group took place in Prague. Thus Fagan (2004, 102), commenting on the anti-IMF/WB protests, observed that “a broad anti-capitalist/anti-globalisation network had been established [in the Czech Republic], which became visible for the first time during the demonstrations against the World Bank [and International Monetary Fund] Summit in September 2000.”

However, this is an overstatement in all respects. In order to organize protests against the summit, a loose organizational platform – the Initiative against Economic Globalization (INPEG – the acronym is derived from its Czech name) – was established in 1999. Its main purpose was to coordinate protest activities against the two international financial institutions on the occasion of their Prague summit that was to take place in September 2000. Soon after the summit it dissolved in fights between its anarchist and Leninist components (E-mail communication 1). The last posting on its website was made on October 13, 2000; after that a link was added with the announcement that the website would no longer be updated (INPEG 2000). The announcement prompts the visitor to go to the website of Czechoslovak Anarchist Federation (one of the most important Czech anarchist platforms, which, however, never exceeded more than 50 active members; e-mail communication 2). One can even doubt whether it could be regarded as a broad network, as both the well-established, but also some of the more radical environmental organizations decided not to participate in it.

The platform was established as a local coordinating structure. However, following the events in Seattle in late 1999 which gave the impetus to the reinvigorated transnational anti-capitalist mobilization, its activities became more internationalized in the follow-up to the summit in 2000, “with key ‘internationals’ taking up residence in Prague several months prior to the event” (Welsh 2004, 327). The foreign activists brought experience and protest know-how, the locals provided knowledge on the specificities of the situation within the country. As a Czech activist, an INPEG organizer recalls (E-mail communication 1):

“Internationals had mostly know-how regarding the organization of protests, tactics, consensual decision-making and the like; on the other hand, they often did not have a clue about specificities of post-communist CR (for example,

specificities as regards the interpretation of articles on assembly, the a priori hostile mood in society, a bit of xenophobia, and most importantly the oversensitivity towards everything that smelled of leftism...) But the most fundamental were language problems – just a few of us local activists were more or less able to speak English...”

Thus international activists played an important role in the preparatory work for the anti-summit protests. The mechanism of relational diffusion was in place in this case (see Tarrow 2005). The international activists shared their know-how, facilitated consensual decision-making within the platform, and were ultimately the driving force behind the contentious actions of the main protest day – a global day of action, September 26 (S26). Likewise, financial resources came to Prague from abroad (E-mail communication 1, 2).

There would probably have been no robust protests had not foreign protesters arrived to the city. Tough security and preventive measures taken by the Czech state created very unfavorable conditions for domestic participants. To put it bluntly, the domestic political opportunity structure was extremely closed. The authorities even created a sort of ‘protestphobia’ among the Prague population. All schools in Prague were closed during the summit, people were advised to leave the city to prevent possible harm during the expected riots, and 12.000 policemen from the whole country were called to “defend” law and order in Prague. Indeed, this campaign – referred to by one activist as “psychological war against ... this protest” (quoted in Welsh 2004, 328) – resulted in many people leaving the city. Therefore, before groups of foreign activists arrived to Prague, there were no contentious protests reported. The summary of protest events related to the summit shows this clearly (see the Appendix).

When looking at the events related to the summit, one can see again the limits of indigenous radical organizing in the Czech Republic. The Appendix summarizes the protest events that took place in Prague before and during the summit. As the data clearly demonstrate, the distribution of events was highly uneven during the summit. September 26 clearly dwarfed all the other days of the anti-IMF/WB protests. The explanation is straightforward: many radical foreign activists came to Prague just for this one day. Before they came and after they left, the protests were unable to mobilize more than a few hundred activists. As one Czech activist said (quoted in Welsh 2004, 333): “According to what we found out, um... most of the tough nucleus arrived in Prague... arrived in Prague only in the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> and left in the evening, and they had no co-ordination whatsoever.” This is also supported by a representative of INPEG, who commented critically on the participation of radical groups in the Prague protests (E-mail communication 1):

“I was mostly angry at these various A (and Anti-fa) groups that did not participate beforehand in the decision-making process, and then came and seized the protests for themselves – primarily I was upset because these groups boast self-determination, radical democracy and the like; and in reality

they behaved in a proto-fascist manner, they manipulated everything in their favor, and in addition they were upset that they were criticized for that....”

Did September 26 have any lasting impact on domestic political activism in the Czech Republic? The involvement of Czech activists in the preparatory work for and the experience of protests helped transfer some ‘protest know-how’ that individual activists utilized later on in their subsequent activities (E-mail communication 1, 3, 4). However, there was no impact in terms of organizational development on the part of domestic organizations and platforms. INPEG itself dissolved soon after the protests, and there was no other ‘offshoot’ of the September events that would translate this episodic mobilization into a lasting legacy for local radical organizations: “Cooperation with foreign participants was truly inspirational, even though sometimes only as a way to learn a different approach, without any other impact on the [political] practice at home” (E-mail communication 4).

In this section I wanted to demonstrate the relatively low political capacity of radical organizations in the Czech Republic. Unlike some other scholars, I doubt that these organizations are able to contribute to a broader political mobilization. There are several reasons for this conclusion. First, these organizations face a firmly closed domestic political opportunity structure, as they are subjected to constant police surveillance, and framed as ‘extremists’ in the public discourse. However, as these groups do not pursue any instrumental goals within the established political process, and aim at the revolutionary transformation of the system of liberal democracy and capitalist economy, they would not utilize these opportunities even if they were open to them. They refuse cooperation with the ‘system’; instead of utilizing established channels of political representation, they search for alternative means of political expression. They conform to the ideal type of countercultural movements that “derive their collective identities from conflicting and confrontational interaction with other groups” (Duyvendak and Giugni 1995, 84). As a result, they are unable to find the kind of wider resonance in society that would help them gain political influence.

While instrumentally-oriented ‘public interest social movements’ display a similarly low ability to mobilize, they nevertheless substitute for the lack of participation by a relatively high level of “transactional capacity”. They network among each other and seek to gain access to the decision-making process. As this route is rejected by the radicals, they are left with no means with which to substitute for the inability to mobilize substantial popular support. As I tried to demonstrate through the case of the anti-IMF/WB protests in Prague, only foreign expertise and participation made it possible for them to engage in a visible contestation. In this respect they resemble their more institutionalized colleagues: the international arena serves as a primary source of their episodically displayed strength, even though the concrete mechanisms of foreign influence differ in their case substantially from those of the institutionalized actors. There are no donors or funding programs for radical groups, but there are experienced activists and traveling militants who help them challenge political

authorities. Although there are some exceptions to this rule, such as the three Street Parties organized from domestic sources in 1998 and 1999 in Prague that attracted two, three and five thousand participants respectively (MF Dnes 06/15/2001, 2), in general, radical organizations are unable to mount a visible political challenge. As the following section illustrates, foreign-donors driven advocacy groups fare better in this regard.

### *The Campaign against Temelin*

The Temelin Nuclear Power Plant (TNPP) project began in 1981 on the basis of an agreement concluded between then-Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union on the construction of a four-unit nuclear power plant in Czechoslovakia.<sup>5</sup> Design was begun in 1984, and in 1986 preparation work began at Temelin in South Bohemia. After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, the decision was made to stop construction on the third and fourth units of the plant (CPA 5/29/92). Subsequently, there was a very intense political conflict over the completion and activation of the first two units. A wide range of actors from the Czech Republic and abroad became involved in it.

Due to the cross-border character of this problem (TNPP is located just 36 kilometers from the Austrian border), a number of both domestic and international organizations became involved in the conflict. Among the most active Temelin opponents were environmental organizations operating in Austria (Greenpeace, Global 2000 – the Austrian member of Friends of the Earth International since 1999), as well as in the Czech Republic (Greenpeace, the South Bohemian Mothers, and the Rainbow Movement – the Czech member of Friends of the Earth International since 1993). In addition to these NGOs, some Austrian *Bundesländer* (mainly Lower and Upper Austria) and the Austrian central government itself and its representatives took part in the conflict on the side of the Temelin opponents. Austrian political parties and individual politicians were also among the most important anti-Temelin voices. However, as this section's goal is not to give an analysis of all the campaign's complexities, but to illustrate the advocacy capability of foreign donors-driven activism, the section almost exclusively focuses on selected activities of the Rainbow Movement (RM).

The first tangible opportunity for domestic mobilization against the power plant emerged in 1992, as the government was to decide on TNPP's future in 1993. Anti-Temelin organizations in Czechoslovakia mobilized during the second half of 1992. As the possibility of stopping the power plant appeared realistic at the time, TNPP became the dominant topic in the environmental sector. In July 1992 activists from Children of the Earth repeatedly blocked, briefly, the main gate to the construction site (CPA 7/21/92; 7/22/92). At the beginning of the school year, activists from Greenpeace organized a lecture tour on nuclear

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<sup>5</sup> The section draws on a more extensive study of the anti-Temelin campaign based on qualitative analysis of news reports concerning TNPP, released by the Czech Press Agency (CPA) throughout the 1990s (see Císař 2003, 2004). The database, which was created on the basis of an electronic search of the CPA's archive, originally contained 6196 news items, which were further processed. This resulted in 266 items which were used for the analysis. Data from interviews and other sources were used to supplement data gained from the CPA.

energy for secondary school students in South Bohemia (CPA 9/4/92). Some of the municipalities surrounding TNPP also became involved in the opposition. The RM, which was founded in 1989 in Brno, began to campaign against the power plant at the end of 1992 (CPA 12/22/92). However, the organization became involved only gradually. The most important actors in the campaign at that time were activists from Children of the Earth and Greenpeace. As I have already mentioned above, Greenpeace, although very active in the campaign in the early 1990s, would ultimately withdraw from the campaign as part of its effort to present a public-opinion-friendly face.

In spite of protests by environmental organizations and interventions on the part of Austrian politicians, the Czech government decided to finish two units of the TNPP (18 ministers voted in favor, none against, and the minister of the environment abstained) (CPA 3/10/93). Nevertheless, the campaign continued in the Czech Republic as well as in Austria. In this phase, Temelin became the dominant problem for the RM. After the government made the decision to complete the plant, the anti-Temelin movement, which began in 1992 in the Czech Republic, lost momentum. It seemed that the window of opportunity to influence government policy had irreversibly closed. According to the co-founder of RM and long-time coordinator of its energy campaign, the original main coordinating organizations Greenpeace and Children of the Earth had given up on Temelin. However, RM activists were convinced that there still existed some uncertainty around TNPP, and that it made sense to invest time and energy and continue the effort to present the problem as an important issue for public discussion in the Czech Republic (interview 4). At the same time, the RM did not limit its activities to the domestic political scene. As soon as spring 1993 it recognized the opportunity to stop the funding of TNPP by preventing the Import-Export Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank) from guaranteeing the loan for financing supplies by Westinghouse to Temelin (CPA 3/15/93; see below).

On the occasion of the anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe, the main gate to TNPP was blocked for the first time by RM in April 1993. According to the CPA, this event was organized by the initiative *Stop Nuclear Energy in the Eastern European Zone*. On the Czech side, Greenpeace and RM took part (CPA 4/26/1993). According to then-leader of the RM J. Patočka, RM was actually the main organizer, putting into practice the strategy brought to the Czech Republic by American anti-nuclear activist Paxus Calta. According to Patočka, "Paxus' experiences from blockades of nuclear power plants in California, his brilliant analytical skills, as well as his international know-how were exceptionally important for the local anti-nuclear activists in the first half of the 1990s. The first blockade of Temelin took place on April 26, 1993 as the culmination of an international seminar jointly organized by Paxus and the Rainbow Movement." (Patočka 1999, 18) Once again, relational diffusion played an important role in the transfer of a specific contentious repertoire.

At a press conference on June 25, 1993, the RM announced that it had begun a campaign focused on opening debate about the TNPP (CPA 6/25/93). In 1993, the RM started organizing regular camps near the TNPP construction site. The RM planned to create cooperative relationships with local interest groups

and help them with their campaign against the power plant. This strategy explicitly emulated similar campaigns in the United States and West European countries. On the basis of these examples, it was believed that cooperation with local opponents would lead to ultimate success, i.e. stopping the construction. The first camp in 1993 lasted for one month and, according to data provided by the organization itself, more than 150 people took part. The camp's participants provided information to the local population and to local officials, and organized a petition against the construction of the power plant. At the same time, besides these more or less conventional strategies, RM engaged in contentious action by organizing a blockade of the power plant's construction site.

By this time, the RM was gaining influence and lobbying expertise. The organization did not only emulate foreign protest templates at home. It also engaged in a trans-national lobbying strategy and helped to spread the domestic controversy regarding the TNPP outside of the country – to US Congress. In 1994, the Congress was to debate the Ex-Im bank's guarantee of the loan for the Temelin project. Due to its perceived importance for the TNPP's future, during the second half of 1993 the US Congress became the focus of intense political lobbying. Various Austrian political agencies employed a vast array of direct as well as indirect lobbying techniques to prevent the loan guarantee. Apart from Austrian delegations, two representatives of the RM traveled to Washington in order to lobby Congress, in close cooperation with Friends of the Earth. According to the coordinator of the energy campaign (interview 4), this was the first involvement of the RM in the political process outside of the Czech Republic:

“we started the first active massive [international] co-ordination in the US in the spring of 1994, when US Congress was to decide whether the Ex-Im Bank would be allowed to provide the guarantee of the [Citibank] loan for Westinghouse's input to Temelin. At that time it made sense to focus on US politics, where an important decision was to be made. During those important weeks we were in Congress for approximately three weeks, and already before that we were co-operating with some Washington-based lobby-organizations. The closest partners were Nuclear Information and Resources Service and Greenpeace... there also were big lobby organizations from Washington such as Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council and others.”

Although the guarantee was ultimately approved, Temelin opponents were able to spark uncertainty about the information which formed the basis of the bank's decision and thus motivate some congressmen to begin to consider it negatively: Congressman Joseph Kennedy and ten other congressmen addressed the Ex-Im Bank with a letter expressing their concern about the bank's involvement in the project. Senators John Kerry, Claiborne Pell and Donald Riegle subsequently joined them (CPA 3/2/94, 3/3/94).

The RM remained the dominant actor of the campaign until the end of the 1990s, and its active lobbying and other activities helped keep the issue high on the political agenda. Annual camps at Temelin were organized by the RM which

thus strived to address the local population near the power plant and to promote savings of electric energy. In addition, regular attempts were made to block the power plant construction site. As detailed above, the TNPP was first blocked by the RM in 1993. After that, the RM used this strategy regularly. During the blockades a certain number of people blocked the gates to the construction site in such a way that they could not be easily dislodged by the police emergency squad. The blockades played an important role not only in the anti-Temelin campaign, but also in the formation of RM's overall media image in the 1990s. The last blockade took place in 1997. The number of participants was greater every year, and the entire event was rated as successful.

After 1997, as the domestic opportunity structure changed in the Czech Republic for anti-Temelin activism, the organization transformed its action repertoire accordingly (interview 4):

“we always employ many methods and combine them – the repertoire is much wider than only blockading Temelin or lobbying in the parliament; we try to use as many strategies as possible. We are very flexible – under the Klaus governments the possibilities were circumscribed, so, we were mostly using direct actions that could help publicize the issue in the media. When there was an opportunity in US Congress for lobbying, we lobbied there. From 1992-93 to 1996 there was a clear emphasis on maintaining the issue as a public problem; after the fall of the Klaus government we emphasized lobbying ..., though media was still important. All in all, strategies are changing – we look at the problem pragmatically and go for these strategies that at the moment have a chance to be successful. The strategy depends on whom we focus on and on how we get to him.”

Although the campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, the RM almost achieved its goal in 1999, when the final governmental decision was to be made on the finalization of the plant. By that time, the organization was widely recognized as an important actor in the debate, and was able to directly lobby in the highest echelons of power. In the months preceding the final decision, RM together with its allies intensified the pressure so that once again, the future of the power plant seemed to be truly uncertain. A suitable indicator of the significance the problem of the power plant had acquired in public discussion, and of the general indecisiveness of the situation in 1999, was that not only did Temelin's opponents mobilize, but also its supporters. Suddenly, TNPP's advocates were no longer certain that the power plant would finally be completed. At the end of April 1999, 700 trade unionists from Czech nuclear power plants demonstrated in Prague in favor of the completion of TNPP (CPA 4/21/99). The demonstrators also presented to the government a petition with 14,582 signatures supporting the power plant. On the anti-Temelin side, the text of a petition signed by over 150 prominent personalities was made public (CPA 5/11/99). A group of Czech senators spoke out against the power plant (CPA 5/12/99), as well as President Havel, whose statement was very scathing (CPA

5/12/99). On May 13, with 11 votes for and 8 against, the government passed the resolution to complete the power plant (CPA 5/13/99).

This section has focused on just a few highlights of the anti-Temelin campaign to provide some evidence on the way RM's advocacy capacity grew. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the campaign demonstrated the organization's ability to mount a significant challenge to official policy. Unlike Greenpeace, due to its foreign funding dependency RM could pursue goals that were approved neither by the political elite, nor by the majority of the population. Needless to say, the fact was often used against the organization in the course of the struggle, when it was framed as the 'fifth column' of Austrian interests in the Czech Republic.

### *Conclusions*

In this paper I first diagnosed the state of political activism in CEE, then drawing on the recent paper by Tarrow and Petrova I differentiated between participatory and transactional forms. Subsequently, I asked what the reasons were for the emergence of transactional activism in CEE. Using evidence from the Czech Republic, I endeavored to show that the conditions for "transactional activism" were created by foreign programs of civil society promotion that enabled "advocates without members" to populate East European civil societies.<sup>6</sup> These programs helped spread the organizational model of advocacy NGO throughout the region. Contrary to gloomy analyses presented by the critical scholarship on democracy promotion, I claimed that although these programs indeed failed to build membership-based organizations, they nevertheless succeeded in creating the conditions for relatively effective policy advocacy to emerge in the region. By doing that, they undoubtedly helped local democracies to develop the infrastructure of interest representation, although this happened without a corresponding development in terms of increased citizen participation.

I tend to think that the one-sidedly negative diagnosis of East European civil societies found in the critical literature betrays more the ideological preconceptions of their authors than the actual development on the ground. By criticizing the ability of East European civil society organizations to mobilize a wide following, these authors project a radical notion of democracy into their analyses, and measure the reality of East European politics by a highly idealized yardstick. Thus I claim that it is these critics rather than the democracy promoters, who have assumed in this literature the role of the 'usual suspects', who have applied an idealized neo-Tocquevillian notion of civil society for the

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<sup>6</sup> Mendelson and Glenn claim that the impact of civil-society-building programs correlated with the variable "integration into the international community". By that they mean "the degree to which both the government and the citizens in these new states have tended, over time, to embrace norms, ideas, and practices common to the democratic states of Western Europe and North America" (Mendelson and Glenn 2002, 10). The impact of the programs in the "thickly integrated states" (the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary in their sample) differed from the "thinly integrated states" (Slovakia under Meciar and Russia) and from the "unintegrated states" (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan Uzbekistan). I tentatively suppose that the results of my research can be generalized for the category of "thickly integrated states", although unlike Mendelson and Glenn I am well aware that this presupposition is in need of further testing.

analysis of East European civic life. As they do not see their radical visions of participating citizenry thrive in the region, they conclude that there is actually no civic life worthy of the name at all. In this paper, I intended to show that lack of participation does not necessarily mean lack of representation. Moreover, some foreign-funding-driven organizations have proven to be more effective political actors than the supposedly autonomous indigenously-supported ones. Although I agree with the critics that this development brought with it professionalization and moderation on the side of SMOs, I doubt the validity of their assumption that the shift from international to indigenous funding would bring a perceptible change in the organizational development and action repertoire of the SMOs.

What type of democracy did foreign funders help create in the region? It is safe to say that the radical vision has never materialized. One should, however, ask whether it was reasonable in the first place to expect such development. Probably one should opt for a more realistic approach to political activism in Central Eastern Europe, and see that by creating conditions for civil society actors to organize and obtain resources, the democracy promoters managed to substantially contribute to the increased accountability of state institutions in CEE, although they did not (and probably could not) induce the masses to actively participate in politics. Therefore, I claim that these programs contributed to the building of liberal democracy as opposed to radical democracy (see Table 11).

**Table 11: Models of Democracy and the Role of Civil Society (CS)**  
rule of law

		rule of law	
		yes	no
direct participation	yes	<b>model of deliberative democracy</b> (Habermas); role of CS: <b>ensuring communication</b>	<b>model of radical democracy</b> (Rousseau, contemporary radical Left); role of CS: <b>direct participation</b> (participatory activism)
	no	<b>model of liberal democracy</b> (Shapiro); role of CS: <b>ensuring transparency and accountability</b> (transactional activism)	<b>non-democracy</b> ; role of "CS": <b>social control</b>

Table 11 presents a typology of democracy based on two dimensions. Four models (one of them non-democracy) are differentiated on the basis of the importance they attach to direct participation and the rule of law respectively. In the liberal understanding (the lower-left quadrant), democracy is tantamount to the kind of institutional and procedural setting that ensures a fair competition among various conflicting interests in the society (see Shapiro 2003). Political participation is given only instrumental meaning in this model – it provides a means for problem-solving. It is expected to help solve social and economic conflicts that cannot be resolved by individual actors without collective cooperation. Civil society organizations in this model are expected to ensure basic transparency of the political process and to make the political elite

accountable for its decisions. In other words, it is expected to ensure the accountability of formal political institutions. In order to achieve that goal, civil society does not need to ensure active participation; the transactional capacity of civil society actors is sufficient in this model.

In the radical understanding (the upper-right quadrant), it is not impartial rules that set the limits for political competition, but the formation of a “general will” within the framework of common deliberation of a political unit, which gives democracy its true meaning. While the liberal understanding is based on the notion of private autonomy (negative freedom), the radical notion draws on the concept of public autonomy (positive freedom). Thus, radical democrats criticize the liberal notion of freedom from politics, and promote instead freedom as active participation. “On the liberal reading, citizens do not differ essentially from private persons who bring their pre-political interests to bear vis-à-vis state apparatus. On the [radical-democratic] understanding, citizenship is actualized solely in the collective practice of self-determination.” (Habermas 1996, 498) According to this model, civil society is expected to ensure direct participation of individuals in collective deliberation (i.e. participatory activism).

The model of deliberative democracy (the upper-left quadrant) innovatively integrates the liberal notion of impartial rules with the radical-democratic concept of participation: “In agreement with [the radical democratic model], it gives center stage to the process of political opinion- and will-formation, but without understanding the constitution as something secondary; on the contrary, it conceives the basic principles of the constitutional state as a consistent answer to the question how the demanding communicative presuppositions of a democratic opinion- and will-formation can be institutionalized.” (Habermas 1998, 248) Deliberation is no longer expected to take place within the framework of the whole political community, but within the decentralized infrastructure of civil society on all levels of decision-making. Thus, this model presupposes the existence of open and accessible platforms of political deliberation and actually strives for the opening-up of public space. Civil society in this understanding is expected to provide a means of open communication and deliberation.

Drawing on this typology, one can safely infer that the conditions for radical democracy have not been met in CEE. In this respect, however, CEE countries do not differ from the established democracies. Post-communist countries moved from non-democracy (the lower-right quadrant), where “civil society” organizations served the purpose of social control, to a situation that can be described with the help of the notion of liberal democracy, probably with some deliberative elements. However, the situation varies among different states, and without a proper operationalization of the three general ideal types one can only speculate on the exact combination of liberal and deliberative aspects in the actually existing regimes. Therefore I leave this question for the forthcoming paper. For the time being, suffice it to say that the failure of democracy promoters to bring to life the radical democratic vision does not necessarily mean that democratic regimes in CEE are unviable. In the expanded version of this paper I hope to demonstrate that the transactional capacity of CEE civil society

organizations makes it possible for them to contribute to the increased transparency and accountability of the regimes they operate in.

#### Appendix: Events of September 2000

##### September 22

- Approximately 250 people gathered on the Palacky Square in protest against the IMF and WB policies (organized by the Humanist Alliance).

##### September 23

- The debate of 300 advocates and critics of the international financial institutions (IFIs) took place in the Prague Castle.
- Some representatives of environmental NGOs, who participated in the debate, protested in the Prague Castle area against global poverty.
- A march of 500 people protesting the institutions' policies took place (organized by the Antifascist Action, Solidarity, and the Federation of Social Anarchists).
- A march of 400-1000 communists protesting the institutions' policies took place (organized by the Communist Youth).
- 150 members of Czech far-Right organizations gathered on Letna.

##### September 24

- INPEG organized a demonstration (150 people) in support of YA BASTA! members who were prevented from entering the country.
- An alternative conference "Another Report" on global poverty organized by Jubilee 2000, Friends of the Earth and the Bankwatch Network started.
- A march organized by INPEG (500 people at the beginning, 1000 at the end) protested against the institutions and in support of the YA BASTA! members held at the border.
- The YA BASTA! activists held at the border shortly blocked all railways on the border station and subsequently planted several fires.
- A demonstration in support of the activists held at the border took place in front of the Czech embassy in Rome, Italy.

##### September 25

- 20 people (Green Party, Communist Refoundation Party) protested in front of the Czech consulate in Milan, Italy.
- 3 activists attached themselves to a bridge approximately 300 meters from the Congress Center, where the IFI's summit was taking place. They attached banners to the bridge construction (People not Profit, Earth First!, an anarchist symbol – A in a circle, End Corporate Rule).
- 100 people gathered on the Fugner Square to protest against the institutions.
- 10 people gathered in the Na Prikope Street to protest against the institutions (organized by the Defense of Environment).

##### September 26 – S26

6 a.m.

- 70 activists from Finland protested in front of a hotel in the centre of Prague.

6:30 a.m.

- A group of foreign activists shortly blocked a border crossing.

7:45 a.m.

- 500 people gathered on Mir Square.

9-10 a.m.

- Since the morning 1000 people had gathered on Mir Square.
- 300 people marched from Wenceslas Square and 300 from the Mezibranska Street to join the demonstration on Mir Square.
- Later on, an additional 1000 YA BASTA! activists marched to Mir Square.

10:00 a.m.

- Several protesters invaded a McDonald's restaurant and damaged the entrance door and the interior.

10:15 a.m.

- 1000-2000 protesters shortly blocked the Anglicka Street.

11:00 a.m.

- There were 5000-7000 activists on Mir Square.

11:30 a.m.

- The activists marched from the Mir Square to the Karlovo Square. Two young Americans were attacked by several protesters.

12:00

- Part of the march changed the direction and turned towards the Congress Center.
- The police forces blocked the access routes to the Congress Center.

12:00-1:00 p.m.

- There were three groups of protesters positioned nearby the Congress Center. The first one with the YA BASTA! activists in the forefront faced police forces on the Nuselsky Bridge that leads to the Center. A second group (1700 people) reached Karlovo Square, then turned to Nusle (a quarter nearby the Center). The third group was on Bratri Synku Square. The police estimate was altogether 5000-6000 protesters.

1:00 p.m.

- The protesters on the bridge attempted to make it through the police forces. The two sides clashed. Water cannons and tear gas were used to pacify the activists. Another attempt to reach the Center was made by the protesters coming through Nusle. Cobblestones, wooden sticks and Molotov cocktails were used against the police, who used water cannons and tear gas in response.

1:30 p.m.

- Clashes in Lumirova Street.

2:30 p.m.

- Protesters forced out of Lumirova Street.
- Several hundred protesters attacked approximately 50 policemen with wooden sticks and tried to make it through the police barriers in Mikulase z Husi Street (100 meters from Congress Center). The police forces employed water cannon, tear gas, and batons. Several activists were taken into custody. A fire was planted by protesters. In neighboring Marie Cibulkove Street a car was demolished, and the entrance door to a hotel destroyed.
- 12 policemen, 5 activists, and a British journalist reported injured in the clashes.

3:00 p.m.

- Already 20 policemen and 10 activists reported injured.
- The crowd in Marie Cibulkove Street was dispersed with the help of tear gas and a water cannon. Some activists were taken into custody. Several hundred protesters in Neklan Street tried to build barricades out of road fence and trash bins. Some of them were set on fire. Cobblestones were used against the police.

3:30 p.m.

- 3000 protesters pulled back from the bridge.

4:00 p.m.

- 300-400 activists remained on the bridge. The rest of the protesters either returned back to Mir Square or dispersed throughout the city.
- 100-200 activists were under the bridge, trying to get uphill to the Congress Center.
- An armored personnel carrier and a water cannon came to the Marie Cibulkove Street. Two water cannons forced protesters out of the Na Slupi and Svobodova intersection. Clashes continued, with cobblestones and wooden sticks used on the side of protesters; tear gas, batons, and water cannons employed by the police forces.
- 200 protesters made it close to the Center.
- 4:15 p.m.
- Hundreds of protesters came to Wenceslas Square in the city centre.
- 4:45 p.m.
- 200 protesters who made it close to the Center were forced out by the police.
- Several hundreds activists marched from Wenceslas Square to the State Opera House.
- 5:00 p.m.
- Dozens of people injured, including 54 policemen.
- Another group of 300 protesters marched towards the State Opera House.
- Many groups of protesters scattered randomly throughout the city center.
- 30 protesters remained on the Nuselsky Bridge.
- Several hundreds of protesters faced the police at the Corinthia Towers (CT) Hotel near the Congress Center.
- 5:30 p.m.
- Protesters at the CT Hotel dispersed by tear gas.
- 1000 mostly Greek protesters gathered in front of the State Opera House.
- 5:45 p.m.
- The demonstration on Nuselsky Bridge ended.
- Traffic in front of the State Opera House was blocked.
- Clashes between the police and small groups of protesters continued throughout the city.
- 6:00 p.m.
- Several groups of protesters were reported to try to block the Congress Center. In Petra Rezka Street 200-300 activists were reported, in U palouku Street 200 activists, and in Zateckeho Street 200 activists.
- A Russian delegate to the summit was injured by a bag filled with sand.
- 7:00 p.m.
- A march of 400 protesters and attacks against public property (street signs, road-fences) reported from Taborska Street.
- 8:00 p.m.
- Shopping windows of a Czech bank branch office were smashed by 10 protesters in Belehradaska Street. Several other attacks on public and private property reported in the city.
- A group of 20-25 Italian and Spanish protesters returned to Nuselsky Bridge. They were accompanied by 10 Czech Punks.
- 10-20 protesters smashed the shop windows of a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant, demolished the interior of a McDonald's restaurant, and continued destroying shopping windows of the C&A store and a Czech bank on Wenceslas Square. Trash bins were knocked over and at least one was set on fire.
- Traffic in front the State Opera house was still blocked.
- 8:30 p.m.
- Police forced protesters out of Wenceslas Square. Cobblestones were thrown at the

police, some protesters were taken into custody, tear gas was used. Some protesters returned later and continued in attacks on shop windows (Mercedes Benz, Peugeot).

8:45 p.m.

- 200 protesters gathered in front of the place where a reception for the delegates hosted by the Czech Prime Minister was taking place.

10:00 p.m.

- During a robust raid the police forces first forced protesters out of Wenceslas Square, bottled them up in the adjacent streets, and took dozens of them into custody. Activities of undercover policemen as provocateurs of acts of violence against property were reported.

September 27

7:00 a.m.

- 40 activists briefly blocked the Hilton Hotel; they were forced out by the police.

9:45 a.m.

100-200 activists that gathered on Mir Square were encircled by the police. Some activists were taken into custody, which provoked an attack against the police.

12:30 p.m.

- 200-300 mostly Spanish protesters were on Mir Square. Their march from the square to the city center was blocked in the Anglicka Street by the police. They sat on the ground, sang, and shouted slogans.

3:30 p.m.

- The protesters were returning from Anglicka Street to the Mir Square.

5:00 p.m.

- Charges against 18 out of more than 500 protesters taken into custody the previous day were reported.

5:30 p.m.

- The Prague conference of the Diverse Women for Diversity movement criticized the policies of IFIs.

6:00 p.m.

- The activists gathered on Mir Square decided to move in small groups to Charles Bridge.

7:00 p.m.

- 300 activists from the Mir Square gathered on the Old Town Square.

7:40 p.m.

- The activists reached Charles Bridge.

8:30 p.m.

- The activists returned to the Old Town Square.

11:00 p.m.

- The gathering on the Old Town Square ended.

Source: Czech Press Agency. Compiled by author.

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### **Interviews:**

Interview 1. A former leader of the Rainbow Movement 1. Brno, 2006.

Interview 2. The present director of Greenpeace, Czech Republic. Prague, 2006.

Interview 3. A member of an anarchy-feminist group. Prague, 2006.

Interview 4. A former leader of the Rainbow Movement 2. Brno, 2001.

Interview 5. A project manager of Transparency International, Czech Republic. Prague, 2002.

- E-mail communication 1. A prominent INPEG activist. 2007.
- E-mail communication 2. A prominent anarchist activist 1. 2007.
- E-mail communication 3. A prominent anarchist activist 2. 2007.
- E-mail communication 4. An anarchist activist. 2007.